Technology

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When reading the following pages it would be well to put everything that we already know about technology aside. Indeed, what knowledge or hypothesis passed off as certainty makes up the scientific aspect of technology? Not much.

If we take a look inside the drawer of established scientific research from which something concrete did emerge, we see a series of utilities. That is, things done for a purpose, even negative, as in the case of military techniques. This purpose is nearly always twofold: to replace something pre-existent, thus achieving a surplus of use and returns, and to open up new horizons of usability. Specialized workers euphemistically referred to as scientists, usually nitwitted and in the payroll of various patrons, do not have ideas, only capability, and these concepts need to be clarified.

Ideas allow us to understand what lies before us and how this could evolve, in other words they enable us to see in order to foresee. Capability enables us to use a device, read a program or even build one (silly binary sequences), put an object in the appropriate box then turn over and fall asleep in peace.

Ideas keep us in constant turmoil, they don't let us rest, they demand the best of us and when we give everything they push us still further, beyond the imaginable, beyond the down-to-earth submission that domesticates both scientists and know-all idiots, but not someone with an idea in their head and their heart. A skilled worker who has completed their research and been applauded by the illustrious public for their discovery, so to speak, feels accomplished. The knowledgeable idiot who has produced the ultimate annotation of a literary opus ends their days in the ivory tower of a university auditorium. Neither of these prototypes is capable of perceiving the powerful derealizing action that is striking both them and their cohorts through technology.

Why?

Because the world is made of things that need to be put in their place, things that lie limply in the hands and projects of these idiots or science workers, are manipulated, built and rebuilt every day so that everything proceeds as it should. Any hiccup must be stifled, any contradiction overcome, but none of this levelling and overtaking must go beyond pre-established roles, even if right now they seem like the impervious heights of operational intelligence. And in fact they are, but all within the ambit of quantitative doing, no quality glimmers on the horizon where the continuous repetition of the accumulation of facts marks the epitome of progress. This collective generalized flattening does not exclude the most productive minds on the planet, those normally considered to be the beacons of intelligence who attract the interest of some of the privileged seeking to increase their wealth.

Far away from this low-life of learned fools and bleating workers there still exists a world of personal commitment, action, attack on the supporting structures seeking to possibly go beyond and reach a quality that can transform life and, along with life, reality right there in front of us. Of course, this is obviously a small thing (a pinprick perhaps?), and so what? For us it is never a pinprick but something that transforms our whole existence as it rises to attack a wretched project that is taking everything we are, our very reality, away from us.

Because technology's project is to accomplish a totalizing task, the derealization of the world.

What do these words mean?

I shall try to explain them as best I can.

The whole of the techniques currently in operation makes up what we call the economy. This has been incorporated into technology. Yet technology is something different, radically different from the sum of the individual techniques. The latter are continually reproducing the world in which we live, technology makes it unreal, takes away its substance, deprives it of its reality. At this point a little patience is required from the reader to avoid giving up and throwing these poor pages away in disgust.

Let's not forget that technology's aim is to flatten and uniformize reality. So far this goal has only been achieved in small part, but the attempts of the various techniques to fight for the highest profit for individual producers cannot go on indefinitely. It is impossible to force everybody to use the same model of car, even if it is the one best suited for the current traffic conditions, or to wear the same suit. So the problem must be bypassed. This is derealization. Objects are freely produced and imposed on consumers through the market in all the ways that we know, but their meaning, their significance, has been weakened, that is, they have been deprived of their substance. This process is not yet wholly visible, it exists in certain sectors more than in others, but it is precisely by promoting this generalized cultural flattening that technology is achieving its goals. We buy cars that are clearly not suitable for the traffic in the big cities and use them well below their potential because the remainder, their imposing construction, is simply a sign of our social level, the so-called status symbol on which so many words have been wasted. Fashion shows present designs that no one could ever wear, so we happily downgrade these cultural aspirations to our own level. A thousand signals (see cinema, television, literature) give us indications of all the erotic impulses that we could experience, then we content ourselves with more modest levels of fulfilment better suited to our own sexuality, which is usually not all that extraordinary. As we point out in another article, our time is horrendously sectorialized, giving us the illusion of living, breathing and enjoying life but we are actually asleep most of the time. Taken to the extreme, this is sounding the death knell for any other possible perspective.

As we can see, technology has succeeded in building an extremely advanced model of derealization in some areas, less so in others, but the project has a greater, all-encompassing, purpose, to derealize the human being.

Cultural flattening is not the main aim of the technological undertaking, this is more an instrument than an aim. Beyond that, a horizon of uniformizing is unfolding in the absence of reality. In the face of this rampant fictitiousness, an effective response could be to reaffirm harsh reality. I am what I am capable of doing, so I try to extend this and become the homo faber of my destiny. I can change it, differentiate it from that of others, live a meaningful life within the very production set-up that is trying to suffocate me. Of course this is just chatter, or gibberish. By merely doing I cannot achieve anything beyond what is being built around me. Unrealized, I build non-realizations and become ever more inclined to take irreality for reality, so can adapt to my zombie life. I can accumulate all the knowledge I like by merely doing, but I will never be able to transform any of it into a tool of liberation or, without going too far, a means of attack. This is the mistake made by many who see knowledge as an aristocratic tool used by the powerful to maintain their privilege. There is a lot of truth in this but something is lacking. Knowledge secures dominance, but dominion

idiotizes itself, leaving differentiated processes in circulation that could endanger it at any moment. A committee of learned idiots and skilled workers would never be able to control the world, whereas the technological process of derealization could. This is what we need to understand. We must seize the instruments to attack while we are still in time, that is, before we are completely derealized by technology, and these instruments are also cultural.

One of the ways that technology is derealizing us is through offering us incomplete patterns of reasoning that are meaningless in themselves, so quite unreal, but which we are already capable of taking as real. A series of these is being formed by extracting certain models of protest from the recent past, opportunely emptying them of content and rendering them unreal. For example, the struggle against technology by refusing to use the gadgets that influence our daily lives (mobile phones, computers, etc.), shutting oneself away in some hole in the country or in the mountains, using ridiculous linguistic obstructions to indicate a rejection of past behavioural patterns (for example the refusal of the masculine form to include the feminine, etc.), the vegetarian ideology, the vegan one, and so many other little traps opportunely put into effect by technology.

The transition from the symbol to the real thing and vice versa often happens rapidly for no apparent reason. We listen to mangled music reduced to symbols that we absorb passively. Every now and then we reemerge due to a surviving trace of culture and become aware of what is happening to our ears. But this step cannot be taken without mediation and support. Often alongside the symbol something comes into play, that distorts the substitutive meaning. The syncretic wealth becomes the intermediary between the symbol as going beyond and the unrealized presence of the thing beckoning us from under our daydream. So we wake up with something in our hands and become aware not only of our idiocy but of the forces that made us so profoundly idiotic. This thing finds us now lost in the forest of symbols but, sometimes, it is so strong as to show us a path amidst thousands and thousands of them, a path that can lead us out to the point of clashing with reality. But this reality isn't that hard thing full of meanings that can be used to satisfy desires and needs, it is still a hallucination. So we are at a crossroads. We can charge head down against all that resonates in ignorance and false immanence, and for this we need a designation, a solid foothold that we must find there in the path that we opened up in the forest with so much effort. Or we can turn the other way and go back to sleep. After all it might just have been a bad dream, a warped sense of life, when we have been dead for some time and stink like corpses without realizing it.

But the designation has struck us, in some way. Resist as we might, having sensed that behind the unreal hides another connotation unknown to us, that behind the turning of the path in the forest there is a breath of life that could wake up the sleeping "beauty" and recall many things that we have long forgotten or have never known. We sense that behind this designation lies the black void of action, the dream that awakens, accusing us of sloth and cowardice, of the urgent need to give our lives a push, look around, and above all fight the syncretism that connects the symbol with the thing symbolized, irreality with reality, the irrealizing mechanism that sang us the lullaby right to the point of a possible awakening.

And here we must put our life on the line.

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